

A

REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Thursday, September 9. 1708.

Who ever took my mad Man for a Conjuror? he would not have this Victory of the Swedes be a Victory; and now behold, when the lame Post comes in, the whole Scene is chang'd, and—

Mad Man. And what? Now you are running into the other Extreme I'll warrant you, and like the rest of the World are all for total Victories.

Rev. Why, what will you have? Have you not now the Particulars of the Action, sign'd by the Generals in the Muscovite Army, and transmitted to the Muscovite Ambassador at the Hague.

M. I'll believe neither one or t'other of them.

Rev. What then, will you allow there has been a Fight?

M. Yes, yes, I'll allow that; and that if you take both the Accounts by a Medium, you may come at something like the Truth of the Story, viz. That the King of S.... I won't say with his whole Army, attack'd a Body of Muscovites as they were posted on some advantagious Post; that after an obstinate and well-manag'd Defence, by which the Swedes may know what in Time the Muscovites may be brought to, the Swedes did gain the Post, but with great Loss; and that the Muscovites, contrary to the Custom of their Nation, made a very orderly Retreat to their grand Army, whither the Swedes did not think fit to pursue them, much less to attack that Army.

Rev. And pray, is this the Reason that makes you so apprehensive of the Muscovites?

M. This

any make me apprehensive of the Muscovites; and I believe, I may soon convince you, that I have Reason on my side; tho' in other things you may reckon me Lunatick.

Rev. I do not find you are so Lunatick in this as in other things—But if you alledge that by fighting the Muscovites, they will learn to fight; have not we been as much in the wrong to teach them to build Ships, and fortifie Towns, and make Ports, Arsenals, Docks, Yards, &c. from whence in time they may be able not only to command the Baltic, but to peep out and ask us how we do in the Ocean? Match us in our wooden Walls, and pay us for our Instruction, as the French have done to our Sorrow and Cost?

M. I am not so jealous of them by Sea, as I am by Land, and there are a great many Reasons to be jealous of them now more than ever.

Rev. What Reasons?

M. Why I'll begin at the Beginning; They have a great and an active Prince that now governs them, who being sensible that his People were wanting, in something which render'd them inferior to other Nations, resolv'd to take a Voyage over the European Part of the World, to see wherein the Deficiency of his People lay, and try if he could bring them into the proper Measures for Improvement, so as to set them on an equal Foot with other People: I need not recite his Travels to Vienna, thro' Germany to Holland, and at last to England; in these Travels, two Observations he made more especially; 1. That of Maritime Affairs; 2. That of Military Affairs.—For the first, he obtain'd here Models for Building, Artists to perform, Rules for managing, and the Manner of fighting in Navies and Ships of War; and what Improvements he has made in that Part, let his Docks and Yards at Petersburg, and his beating the Turks at Azoph, testify.

For his Military Affairs, and the Management of his Army, he saw, that War was best to be carry'd on by tumultuary Collections of Men; that it was not Multitude, but Discipline and Exercising of Troops to Arms, that obtain'd Victory;

not make Soldiers, that Crowds were not Armies, and that he might have a hundred thousand Men in the Field, and No Soldiers. But that if he would be a Match for his Enemies, he must do as they did, viz. Lift, cloth, arm, and pay a certain Number of Men, who should make Arms their Business, and the War their Employment; that should be bred to Discipline, taught now to bear the Fatigues of the Field, and look an Enemy in the Face: He found his Subjects forward enough in the Field, and capable of receiving the Instructions necessary; he found them a Match for other Men, when assisted with the same Advantages; he found them strong, hardy, patient, brave and subservient, Things absolutely necessary and exceedingly to be valued in a Soldier; —and that they wanted nothing but being us'd to the War. He found that even in other Countries the best Men were not valued, till they had been season'd to Service, and that the same Seasoning would bring his Subjects to be as serviceable as any other People.

With this View he has changed the whole Face of his Military Affairs; his Armies are now no more Crowds of Boors, and Carpenters taken out of his Woods, arm'd in a Hurry, and driven into the Field like Beasts to a Butchery; But he picks out certain Numbers of Men, chosen for Strength of Body, large Stature, and suitable Age; for he has this Advantage of all the Princes in the World, that he can pick and cull, as we call it, all over his Empire, and who he bids go, not only must go, but goes willingly—These he has formed into Regiments, cloth'd and arm'd them after the German Manner, and exercising them constantly to the Practice, and handling their Arms, and maintains them in constant Pay—For the instructing them in the Art of War, he gives Encouragement to Foreigners, both for inferior Officers and for Generals, of which he has an incredible Number, Germans, Danes, English, Scots, ay, and Swedes too in his Service—He has, as some relate, 12 General-Officers now in his Army of Germans, and 2 or 3 of Danes, besides Colonels, Captains and Lieutenants without Number;

Moscovy, Engineers, like
Men &c. are all Foreigners; and he is
breeding and instructing his own People gra-
dually, giving Encouragement to them that
behave well and are forward, and severely
punishing those that fail or neglect.

By these Methods the Muscovites, instead
of a tumultuary Rabble as usual, have now
a regular Camp, a disciplin'd Army, and
begin to be formidable; it is true, they
have a terrible School-master of the King of
S...., but they will be the better Soldiers
when they are taught, and what cares the
Czr if it cost him 50000 Men to get a
good Army; when they are knock'd on the
Head, they are paid their Arrears, and their
Accoun'ts are ballanced; and if he keeps an
Army of 150000 Men out of them, beaten
to the War, and bred up in their Discipline,
that are hardned to the Field, and may be
call'd true Veterans, he gains his End—
And once bring but the Muscovites to this
Posture in their Affairs, that they have
150000 Men of old Troops in their Pay,
and that their own Gentry come to learn
the Art of War; I say, he will become ter-
rible to all Europe, for he may have 3 times
that Number brought into the Field, and
they will in time grow as good Soldiers as
any in Europe.

This is the Ground of what I am upon;
the Czar of Muscovy, if he goes on thus
regularly to exercise and discipline his Peo-
ple, and keeps a great Army on Foot, as
he can easily do; should the Swede beat
him upon every Occasion, and first or last
cut him of 10000 Men or two, yet shall
those that remain be every Year better
than they were before, and in the End he
shall be able to beat all his Conquerors.

Rev. There is too much Truth in what
you say to be contradicted—and I doubt
future Ages may have Occasion to repent
this War; but what would you have done?

M. What signifies a mad Man's saying
what he would have done; Princes are too
mad to take such Advice as mine is?

Rev. But you may give your Opinion;
what would you have the King of S....
do now, to which you would say Amen, I
mean as to the Affair of Muscovy? And if
you will tell me what you would have him

do there, I'll tell you what I wish he would
do every where else.

M. Why upon that Condition, I'll tell
you; I would have him, having push'd the
Muscovite to a Necessity of Peace, accept it
upon good Terms, which I believe he might
now obtain, and which, as some Reports
say, he offers; Viz. 1. That he quit Poland,
and acknowledg'd King Stanislaus, that so
that miserable Kingdom may be restor'd to
its usual Tranquillity 2. That he quit Li-
vonia, and all the Ports he has taken in the
Baltick, such as St. Petersburg, a Place
likely to be made one of the strongest Ports
in the World, Narva, and the like, and
give up all his Naval Preparations there to
the Swedes. 3. That he shall disband his
Army, and not keep above a certain Num-
ber of Troops in Pay on that side of Europe.
If the Muscovites will do these Things, and
the Swede should refuse to make Peace up-
on these Terms, then—

Rev. What then?

M. Then I say, he will go on with the
War till he repent it, or at least I believe
so—Nay, tho' he should conquer Muscovy,
and depose the Czar, he will yet repent it;
for he cannot maintain his Conquest, nor
keep the Country when he has got it.

Rev. I am of your Mind, and therefore
I wish, his S... His Majesty would patch up
a Peace with the Czar of Muscovy, Europe
could find him Room for Action, and bet-
ter reward it; he might better employ his
great Thought, and find more Glory here.

M. What would you have him do here,
I beseech you?

Rev. I would have him make himself
the Arbitrator of Europe, and put an End to
her bloody Contention; I would have him
come down into these Parts of the World,
where his Power would so easily turn the
Scale, that like his great Master to the
Winds in another Case, he need do no
more, speaking with Deference to the Allusion,
than say to all the Princes of Europe, Peace
be still. If he would say to the French King,
you must abandon Spain, and all its De-
pendencies, and be content with France on
the Foot of the Pyrenean Treaty, he must
do it— If he would say to the Confederacy,
you must be content with the Spanish Mo-
narchy.